

Speech by Chairman Seah Moon Ming
MOU Signing with NTUC and NTWU
Bishan Depot, 31 Oct 2025

Good morning,

Secretary General of NTUC, Mr Ng Chee Meng.

Executive Secretary of NTWU, Ms Yeo Wan Ling.

Group CEO, Mr Ngien Hoon Ping.

Union brothers and sisters, colleagues.

1. Thank you for joining us today to witness the signing of this MOU, which appoints SMRT as the **Queen Bee for Labour-Management Relations, Safety, and Kaizen**. We are honoured to be the **first public transport operator** to be appointed as Queen Bee by NTUC to uplift contractors and their workers.
2. This appointment builds on our Queen Bee for Kaizen journey, which began in 2020. Next month, we will open **our Kaizen Centre** to further share our learnings. Today's MOU marks a new chapter — one that expands our role to strengthen the entire transport ecosystem with our partners, NTUC and NTWU.

The Queen Bee Model

3. The Queen Bee model is about nurturing the hive — uplifting smaller companies and workers across the sector. This approach is unique to Singapore. It's anchored on our **tripartite partnership between Government, Unions, and Employers**. Unlike overseas models, our focus is on raising industry standards, as well as improving the welfare of workers at the same time.
4. We deeply value our partnership with NTUC and NTWU. This second appointment allows us to bring together our strengths in Kaizen, Safety, and Labour-Management Relations to mentor and support our ecosystem partners.

Our Three Focus Areas

5.1. Safety

Safety is at the heart of SMRT's operations. Contractor supervisors already undergo structured safety orientation, including e-learning and site-specific briefings.

For the past three years, we have shared trends and lessons learnt at SMRT's Contractor Safety Forum. As we move towards being a data-driven company, we also want to help our contractors use data to further strengthen safety outcomes.

5.2. Kaizen

Kaizen is our **continuous improvement engine**. Since our first Queen Bee Kaizen run in 2021, we've established three Kaizen Learning Centres and trained 163 participants from 65 companies.

Our motto is simple: "Good Today, Better Tomorrow." By sharing Kaizen practices, we hope to foster a culture of ownership and problem-solving, improving processes and reducing costs across the ecosystem.

5.3. Labour-Management Relations

Our third pillar is Labour-Management Relations — a new area of shared learning.

Many smaller companies may not fully see the benefits of unionisation. Yet, strong union partnerships help retain

talent, protect workers, and gain access to NTUC training and support.

6. Since our union merged with NTWU in 2012, 70% of SMRT employees are now union members. This trust-based relationship has strengthened over the years. SMRT works with more than 200 contractors, and we want to bring them along. This MOU includes developing a playbook for effective Labour-Management Relations.

A Progressive Approach

7. We will start with 200 contractors, ensuring engagement is meaningful and sustainable.
8. Through workshops and Communities of Practice, we will share frameworks, courseware, and experiences. We'll mentor companies to set up Company Training Committees and build stronger union-management partnerships.
9. This tripartite approach ensures workers' voices are heard, their welfare protected, and they're ready for future challenges — while supporting operational excellence for all.

10. As Queen Bee, SMRT will learn, lead, and uplift others. This MOU is more than a partnership. It is a commitment to grow together — building a stronger, safer, and more resilient transport ecosystem. Progress is most meaningful when it is shared. Thank you for being part of this journey. Thank you.